

# **Massachusetts State Police Forensic Services Group**

## **Annual Report on CODIS 2010**

### **Purpose**

The State Police Crime Laboratory is required to report annually to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means and to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Security in accordance with the Governor's General Appropriation Act for FY2011, line item 8000-0106. The following data is being reported for this purpose.

### **Introduction**

The Forensic Services Group of the Massachusetts State Police, commonly known as the Crime Laboratory, contains the CODIS Collection and Investigative Unit, (CCIU) as well as the DNA/CODIS Unit. The CCIU is responsible for the collection and verification of offender samples. The DNA/CODIS Unit is responsible for uploading offender and forensic casework profiles to the state DNA index system (SDIS) and the national DNA index system (NDIS).

The DNA/CODIS Administrator issues "hit" reports. A hit is generated in SDIS or NDIS when an offender's DNA profile is matched to a forensic casework profile in the database. A case to case hit is generated when a forensic casework profile from one incident is matched to a forensic casework profile from a different incident. This indicates the same person was present at each crime but their identity is currently unknown. This type of hit may result in the obtainment of a "John Doe" warrant.

The combined DNA index system (CODIS) is a computerized network that stores DNA profiles from offenders as well as forensic casework profiles attributable to an incident. The FBI oversees the national DNA network and allows states to do a nationwide search in NDIS. There were **9,110,007** offenders in NDIS as of January 5, 2011. There were **346,613** forensic casework profiles in NDIS as of the same date.

The CODIS database has existed in Massachusetts since 1999. It is administered by the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory. Current state law allows samples from all convicted felons to be included in the database. There were **84,966** offenders in SDIS as of January 5, 2011. There were **5,838** forensic casework profiles in SDIS as of the same date.

### **Administration of CODIS**

The administration of the CODIS program can be characterized by six general categories of work conducted by the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory.

1. **Collections:** This category includes scheduling collections, collecting DNA blood samples from offenders, and verifying that each offender has been convicted of a felony that qualifies the DNA profile to be maintained in the CODIS database. DNA collections are done primarily by Crime Laboratory personnel in conjunction with County Correctional Facilities, the Department of Correction, and Probation Departments. This category requires technicians who are certified to perform DNA collections. Staff that are trained and certified to assess criminal records through the Board of Probation are also necessary.
2. **Analysis-Offender Samples:** This category involves conducting DNA analysis on the offender specimens at the MSP Crime Laboratory. The analysis step requires that a qualified DNA analyst perform necessary reviews and quality assurance tasks to ensure the accuracy of the DNA data.
3. **Analysis- Forensics Casework Samples:** This category involves conducting DNA analysis on forensic casework specimens at the Crime Laboratory. The analysis step requires that a qualified DNA analyst perform necessary reviews and quality assurance tasks to ensure the accuracy of the DNA data.
4. **Database Search:** The software compares offender DNA profiles and forensic casework DNA profiles in CODIS and searches for ones that are a match. This category requires that a qualified DNA analyst assess the potential matches identified by the computer search.
5. **Verification:** This category occurs after an offender's DNA profile in CODIS has been determined to be the same as a forensic casework DNA profile in CODIS. Three verifications occur. One involves retesting the offender's DNA sample to verify that the result contained in the CODIS database is correct. The second verification step involves verifying the identity of the offender by comparing the inked fingerprint provided at the time of the collection to the fingerprint record contained in the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). The third verification step involves rechecking the status of the qualifying offense of the offender involved in the CODIS hit.
6. **Hit Report:** This category involves the issuance of a formal report of the CODIS Hit. If it is an in state hit, the report is issued to the case investigator and the jurisdictional district attorney's office. If it is a Boston Police Department Crime Laboratory hit, the Boston Crime Lab receives the report. If it is an out of state hit, the report is sent to the state crime laboratory where the state database is maintained. For accreditation and quality assurance purposes, CODIS hit reports are technically and administratively reviewed by qualified individuals before issuance. The reports are sent by certified mail

In addition to these tasks, there are many other elements of the CODIS program such as compiling and reporting statistics to the FBI, researching and creating systems to ensure all eligible offenders are participating in CODIS, upgrading and validating new database software and enhancing analytical capabilities through the use of automation and robotics. Continued support, collaboration, funding and resources are needed to maintain the successful administration of the complex system of CODIS.

### **Data Provided**

The number of cases introduced into the CODIS database (NDIS) in 2010 includes **11,704** convicted offenders' profiles and **756** forensic profiles.

The total number of confirmations (hits) from the CODIS database (NDIS) in 2010 was **416**. There were **380** confirmations to the Massachusetts database, and **36** confirmations to states other than Massachusetts. Table 1 indicates the number of hits referred by the Crime Laboratory to each District Attorney's office.

**Table 1. 2009 CODIS Hit Letters by District Attorney's Office**

<b>District Attorney's Office</b>	<b>Number of Hit Letters</b>
Berkshire	6
Bristol	21
Cape and Islands	10
Essex	32
Hampden	74
Middlesex	50
Norfolk	33
Northwestern	8
Plymouth	15
Suffolk	7
Worcester	33
Other*	91
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>

\*This field represents hits from Boston Police Department cases. Notification is made by the Boston Police Department to the appropriate District Attorney's office. Also note that a hit letter may refer to more than one criminal case linked to an offender.